THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (c) Formulation and selling of tours to various destinations is primarily undertaken by tour operators, travel agents and State Tourism Development Corporations based on demand and tourist infrastructure available. The Ministry of Tourism has granted Central Financial Assistance to Governments of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh for development of the Buddhist Circuits. The Buddhist destinations of these States are also being promoted in overseas markets through the India tourism Offices abroad.

Linking of Port Blair with Phuket for promotion of tourism

1712. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that, of late, Thailand has become the main outlet of narcotic trade of Myanmar;

(b) if so, whether it will not be unwise and dangerous to sign an accord to link Port Blair with Phuket for promoting tourism; and

(c) whether there has been a thorough investigation that Phuket is totally free from LTTE operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (c) The agreement between Phuket and Port Blair provides for cooperation in education and culture, urban development, solid waste management, commerce, investments besides tourism.

Promotion of Medical Tourism

1713. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a comprehensive scheme has been formulated to promote India as a healthcare destination to attract more foreign tourists;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the low-cost super-speciality